

# The Holly Jolly Project

Dear Sir or Madam,

Enclosed is an application for the Holly Jolly Project, a holiday toy program for families. Please copy and distribute to all families, also please feel free to distribute more than once as family's needs may change as the time draws nearer to the holidays. Below is some information about our program.

- **What do we do?**

The Holly Jolly project provides toys for children birth to 14 or 8<sup>th</sup> grade that are in the communities of Braintree, Brookfield, Chelsea, Randolph, Rochester, Royalton, Strafford, Sharon, and Tunbridge. (other towns may be served on a case to case base depending on the need.)

- **How are we different from other toy give a ways?**

The Holly Jolly Project continues to fill requests for toys up until Christmas Eve, while other give-a-ways have a deadline for applications. We have found that the neediest families are those who come through at the last moment. They are the working poor who thought they would have enough resources to cover, they are the families who are often faced with making decision like: the family car broke down and they have to choose between buying presents and fixing the car and they are most often new comers to the world of services. We do have a return by date on our application but that is only to encourage families to send back the application as soon as possible. We do take applications after that date as is stated on the application. Our ability to serve late application is always connected to how much support we get from the community.

- **Our history and Who's involved?**

The Holly Jolly Project is one of the oldest and longest running holiday gift programs in the community. Holly Jolly is a non-funded program that originated at CVCAC and was taken over by two parents from the community Prudence Pease and Joan Colburn. It was passed down to another area parent Pam Doyle in 2003. Pam Doyle is the Head Elf and director/coordinator of the program working with; Community Action, Sunapee Bank, Randolph Chamber of Commerce, Valley Bowl of Randolph, Colburn's Store in Strafford, local area businesses, churches and people from the community. We operate only by donations and help from community members. We do not receive any government (Federal, State, or Local) funding. All gifts and donations stay in the community. Many of the local "Angel Trees" or "Mitten Trees" are children that are being served by this program.

- **How do Applications get distributed?**

Applications are distributed through the Central Vermont Community Action, Orange County Parent Child Center, VNA, schools, daycares and churches in the towns served receive applications to distribute. Families may also call the program and one can be sent directly to a family or it could be emailed. We also have a Facebook page with applications available on it. We can email them out but still need the "hard copy" sent back to the program to process it.

- **Why do we do this without a cut off date?**

One year after our toy give away night we had a small box of gifts left and three days to go till Christmas and as always on Christmas eave night we received a call about a family in need not only of gifts but also of a tree and of a Christmas dinner. Holly Jolly delivered. When we receive cash donations from the community it is instances like these that those kind of donations support. When I began on this journey I did it for the wonder in the children's eyes – we don't have a cut off date and we do that for the relief in the parent's eyes.

I thank you for your part in this program by helping to distribute applications to families in need. I would also like to point out that sometimes the families that are in the most need are the ones we don't know about and by sending out applications to all we can help those that may have otherwise gone with out.

Sincerely,

*Pamela Doyle*

Pam Doyle, Head Elf

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